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20 May 1965



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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20 May 1965

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

C O N T E N T S

25X1



5. Laos: Communists are moving trucks from the panhandle back to North Vietnam but continue aerial resupply. (Page 7)
6. Bolivia: Dissension within the junta may further reduce the stability of the Barrientos regime. (Page 8)
7. Trucial States: Egypt partially succeeding in undermining British influence in Persian Gulf. (Page 9)
8. Notes: France-NATO;  Dahomey. (Page 10)

25X1

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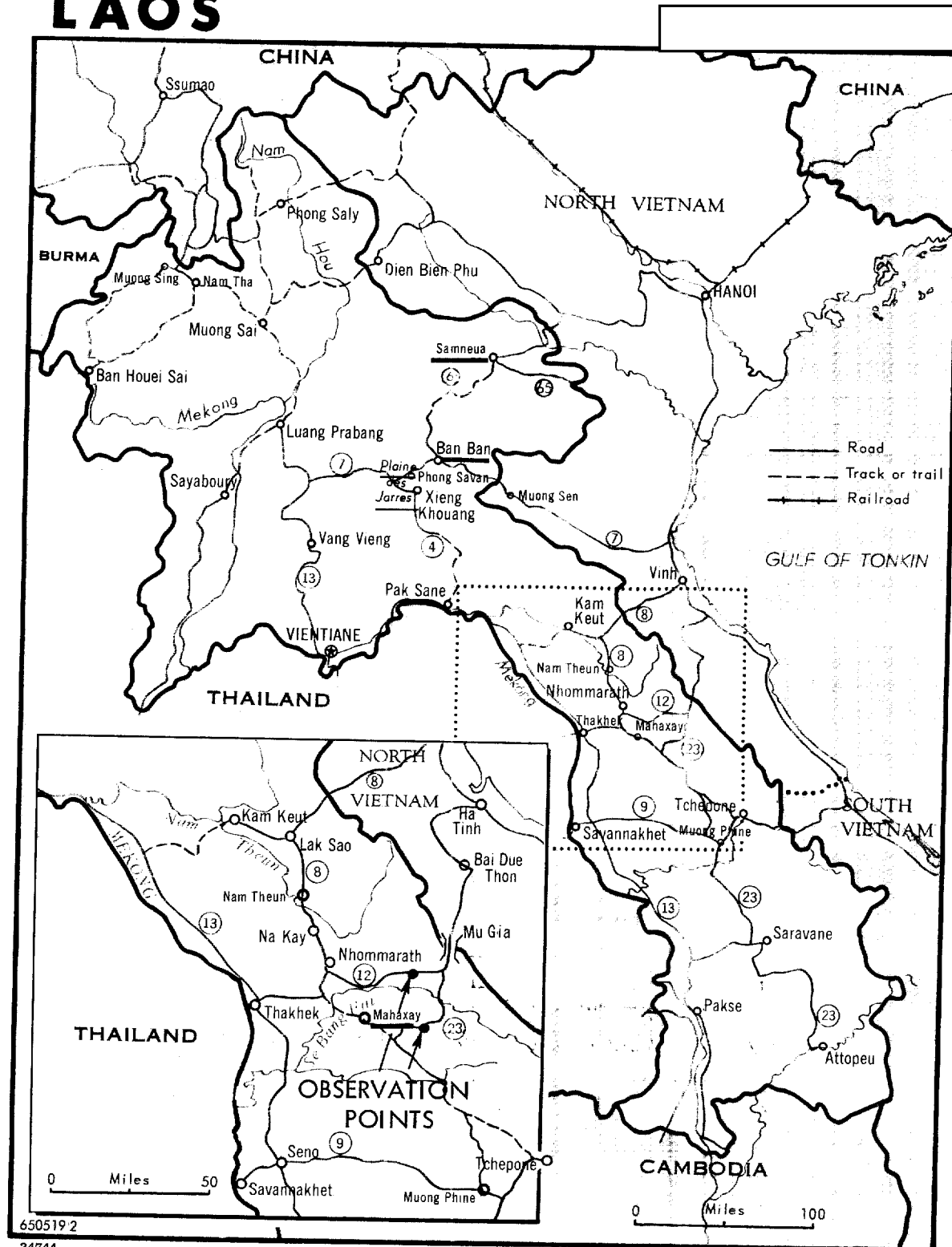
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Next 9 Page(s) In Document Exempt

Approved For Release 2003/02/27 : CIA-RDP79T00975A008300170001-1

LAOS

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Laos: The Communists may be sending trucks from the Laotian panhandle back to North Vietnam prior to the onset of the rainy season.

On the key Route 23 infiltration route the rate of southbound truck movement so far this month has been only half that observed by roadwatch teams in April, which was the heaviest month for truck traffic this year. In sharp contrast there has been at the same time a heavy movement of trucks back toward North Vietnam. Normally Route 23 becomes impassable in late May or early June. The Communists, therefore, may be returning trucks to secure areas before the rains start.

Limited deployment of troops may also be under way. For the first time since January substantial numbers of troops have been sighted moving along Route 12. According to a roadwatch team, on 15 May about 225 troops were seen moving east from the Mahaxay area, and two days later some 500 moved west.

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Recently received photography indicates that the Communists are continuing efforts to improve the security of Route 65 which connects Samneua town with North Vietnam. Various support buildings and some antiaircraft sites have been camouflaged and moved from vulnerable locations. Roads to the west and southwest of Samneua are being extended in an apparent effort to supply Communist forces which have been operating against pockets of government guerrillas since January.

25X1

20 May 65

7

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*Bolivia: Dissension within the military junta may further reduce the stability of the Barrientos regime.

There is growing evidence of dissension and lack of coordination in the government. Junta president Barrientos indicated yesterday to Ambassador Henderson that he has had to make various concessions to armed forces commander General Ovando, army commander La Fuente and minister of defense Suarez to keep their support. Barrientos said he remains firm, however, in his determination to reestablish order throughout the country and keep Juan Lechin in exile.

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Most political and student leaders, who up to now have remained passive in the crisis, are likely to move into active opposition should any sign of government weakness become apparent.

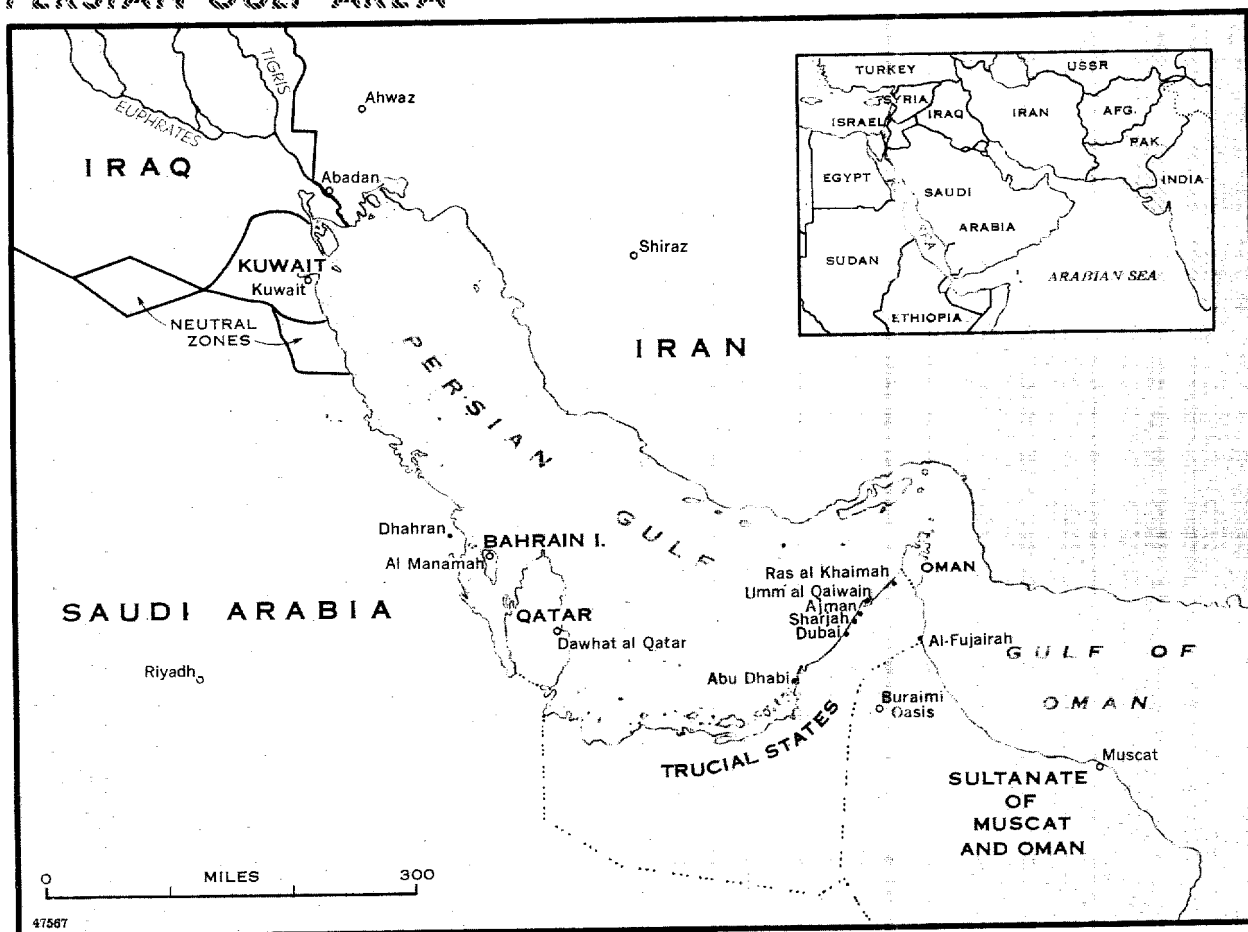
Demonstrations scheduled for yesterday in La Paz did not materialize, mainly because of government concessions to labor and student leaders and preventive armed patrols by police, army and air force units. Bolivian authorities fear there may be violence today, however, during funeral services for a labor "martyr" killed on 18 May when police stormed an extremist-controlled radio station.

25X1

20 May 65

8

PERSIAN GULF AREA



Trucial States: [Egypt apparently is achieving some further success in its efforts to undermine British influence in the Persian Gulf]

[The Arab League is about to obtain an official foothold in the British-protected Trucial States by establishing "development offices" in two of the states, Sharja and Ras al-Khayma. The two agreed to this during a visit to the area last week by an Arab League official who offered \$2.5 million for economic development in the coming year]

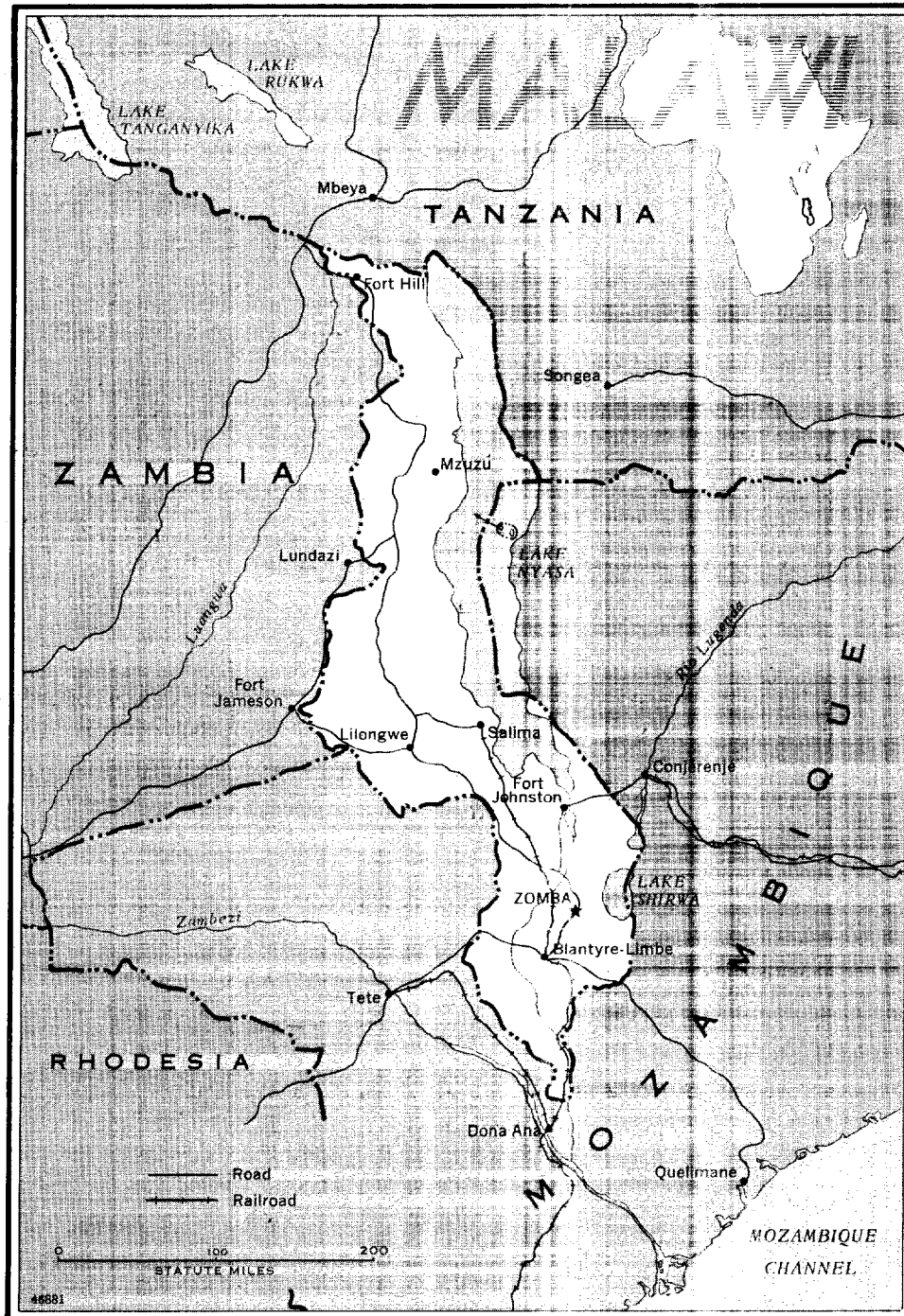
[Cairo probably hopes to use the league offices as a base for anti-British activities. The ruler of Sharja rejected British protests that accepting the office constituted a breach of the treaty by which London handles Sharja's foreign affairs]

[Although the Trucial States Council had unanimously resolved only last March that any aid must be channeled through their own newly established development fund, the Arab official persuaded all but two of the rulers to accept aid directly from the league.]

25X1

20 May 65

9



NOTES

France-NATO: [De Gaulle apparently is planning to propose a revision of the North Atlantic Treaty to provide for an automatic response to any armed attack against an alliance member. His intention presumably is to embarrass the US, whose constitutional requirements he knows precludes acceptance of such a revision, and at the same time advance his campaign against NATO. A US refusal to sharpen the treaty language would strengthen De Gaulle's contention that Europe, if attacked, cannot assume that the Americans will come to its defense.]

25X1

25X1

20 May 65

10

Dahomey: [The immediate threat of a military take-over appears reduced. Chief of staff General Soglo told the US ambassador early this week that he now planned to wait to see what steps moderate Premier Ahomadegbe will take in response to pressures for his resignation. A change in the present government still seems likely within the next few months, however. Dahomey's deteriorating financial situation will require additional short-term French aid, and new opposition to Ahomadegbe appears to be building up in the labor unions and the governing party.]

25X1

20 May 65

11

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